



## **Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission**

### **Tuesday, February 25th at 5:00 PM**

### **Air Pollution Control District Boardroom**

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **I. Welcome and Announcements –Katy Schneider, Co-Chair**

The following Louisville Metro Tree Advisory Commission (hereinafter, “Commission” or “LMTAC”) members were present: Henry Heuser (Co-Chair), Katy Schneider (Co-Chair), Allen Steinbock (Secretary/Treasurer), Monica Orr, Amy Johnson, Todd Eberle, Robert Eberenz, Jr., Maria Koetter, as well as ex-officio Commissioners Mesude Duyar, Sherie Long, Michelle King and Mark White.

Co-Chair Henry Heuser brought the meeting to order.

Co-Chair Katy Schneider announced Claude Stephens as a new Commissioner. He is not official yet, but will start as a new commissioner next month. Claude introduced himself. He lives in the Irish Hill neighborhood and is a 7<sup>th</sup> generation Louisvillian. He has an interest in the LMTAC as a citizen and he works at Bernheim Arboretum and Research Forest. Claude is aligned with individual and small organization efforts.

Katy announced that Secretary/Treasurer Allan Steinbeck currently represents the LMTAC on the Brightside Board. She said Commissioner Monica Orr will serve as the official LMTAC representative to the Tree Canopy and Urban Heat Island Community Action Team, and Commissioner Kenya Wade will be the new official representative to the Brightside Board of Directors.

#### **II. Approval of Minutes – Henry Heuser, Jr., Co-Chair**

There were two changes to the January 2014 meeting minutes. On the bottom of page 2, “want” was changed to “won’t” and on the bottom of page 3, “gates” was changed to “grates.” Henry asked for and received unanimous approval of the minutes from last meeting with suggested changes.

#### **III. Old Business**

##### **a. Sustainability – Maria Koetter, Director, Office of Sustainability**

Maria Koetter, Commissioner (Office of Sustainability) gave an update on the Tree Canopy Assessment contract. A recommendation has been made on the vendor for the Tree Canopy Assessment. It is slated to take 6 – 8 months. Once it's completed, we'll have definitive numbers for tree planting goals. The cost is \$50,000 coming from the mayor's budget and \$50,000 coming from

MSD's Board, which has been approved. The LMTAC co-chairs need to raise the balance. Katy said the LMTAC will need to raise \$15,700 through the Louisville Tree Fund. She has approached the LG&E Foundation. They are considering the proposal. Katy asked the Commission to try to convince LG&E to help if they have any connections. Katy mentioned that the proposal could be helpful to LG&E. LG&E receives a lot of complaints about what they do to trees.

#### **b. Parks Tree Plantings – Mesude Duyar, Forestry Manager, Parks**

Mesude Duyar, Ex-officio Commissioner (Metro Parks) gave a presentation on Metro Parks' tree plantings. (See Attachment A for a shortened version of the presentation). She said they will have 977 trees planted by the end of the planting season. The presentation included a map showing the parks where tree plantings are taking place. 410 trees were planted with the MSD grant. 150 trees were planted with Plant for the Planet funds.

Henry asked Mesude to explain Plant for the Planet. Mesude said Plant for the Planet is LG&E funding. It's a program that has been going on for three or four years.

Katy asked if Plant for the Planet gives money or actual trees. Mesude responded that they received money and they had to match with cash or labor.

Mesude continued with her presentation. Ecotech funded 30 trees, and I Love Louisville planted 14 trees. Metro Parks will maintain the trees that have been planted. In total, 718 trees were planted by the Metro Parks Landscape Division, 245 trees were planted by the Olmsted Parks Conservancy (OPC), and 14 were planted by Love Louisville Trees. Based on all of the funding received by Metro Parks for this year's planting season, the average tree cost is \$130.00. This does not include the costs for OPC trees. Mesude didn't have those numbers. 70 trees came from the Metro nursery. The costs of these trees are also not included in the \$130 number. The presentation then included photos of several tree plantings around Louisville. On April 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014, Metro Parks will celebrate Arbor Day.

Henry asked if Mesude will be able to count on these same funds next year. Mesude said she is working on applications now. They have some capital projects. She applied for another LG&E grant already. Metro Parks does not have tree funds in their budget. They received \$40K from MSD this past year. They do have Parks Foundation funding available for tree planting. This year's \$130 average price per tree is really good. Contracting out planting trees may not be the best use of funds. It seems like it would be more efficient to use internal staff. Tree purchasing, installation and maintenance all costs about \$350 per tree. This cost can vary. The survival rate at the end of the 3-year establishment period is 97%. Metro Parks is working very hard to properly maintain the trees. Metro Parks tracks the GPS coordinates of all of the trees they have planted. They have a watering system in place.

Henry suggested that all of the Metro Council members hear this information.

Audience member said tree planting is part of budget presentation every year.

Henry asked the audience member to clarify the Parks Foundation. Audience member said that it's geared for the other parks as opposed to the Olmsted Parks. They are more geared to getting people outdoors and creating playgrounds. They have a \$1.5 million phased project to build a new playground/spray-ground in the California neighborhood. There will be a playground at Slevin Park. They can't do a spray-ground there because it's on top of a landfill.

Henry asked if there is an Executive Director of the Parks Foundation. Audience member said no. David Klein was the founder.

## **IV. New Business**

### **a. Louisville's Downtown Tree Mapping Initiative: Progress Report – Patrick Smith, Urban Design Studio**

Patrick Smith introduced himself. He teaches a course with Patrick Piuma in the Department of Urban Planning at the University of Louisville (UofL). He said last year their class focused on urban sustainability issues. His presentation tells the results. (See Attachment B for presentation). They wanted to work with the community to get better tree data for Louisville. On the first slide, everything in red and pink is an impervious surface. Because of the large amount of impervious pavement, Louisville is getting hotter faster than other cities. The National Resources Defense Council (NRDC) is saying by 2050, we're going to have extreme heat and a mortality rate greater than any other city. In 2013, a lot of great papers were published. One study found a connection between health and trees. Another study looked at communities devastated by Emerald Ash Borer. The places that lost the most trees had higher rates of respiratory diseases. Trees are great for property values, storm water reduction and air quality improvement.

Henry asked Patrick Smith about the Fond du Lac slide. Henry wants a copy of the side from Patrick.

Patrick continued his presentation. He said another study found that the individual worth of trees is \$193,250 over its lifetime. Patrick said the students looked at the 27% number. They researched public data that is available other than the national land cover dataset. The National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP) data can be used to estimate canopy coverage. There is also LIDAR data. Patrick's class estimated canopy coverage at Tyler Park and in the Portland neighborhood based on NAIP data. They didn't do it for all of Jefferson County because data is a little old. You can see the disparity based on the NAIP data. The LIDAR data allows them to get more fine-grained. Patrick hopes to use this data with students in the future. When you look at imagery, it's hard to tell the number of trees that are in building shadows. Some organizations count their trees (e.g., UofL, Metro Parks) either by counting or with GPS. Patrick and his class tried to figure out how to count trees by engaging the community. They considered making this an app. There is an accuracy issue with cell phone GPS, but paper mapping seems to work better. They did a lot of this work during the Mayor's Week of Service to collect tree data downtown. The data is now online. It's a snapshot of spring/summer 2013. The data includes canopy size, species, subspecies, qualitative assessment of tree health, grow space, height and canopy radius. Patrick showed the map of the results.

Henry asked Patrick what the red dots mean. Patrick said the red dots are trees considered unhealthy. They counted 4800 trees downtown. Since then, many trees along the interstate were cut down.

Henry asked if Central Park was on the map. Patrick said no.

Henry asked Patrick what the black on the map represents. Patrick said the black areas are streets.

Patrick said the next map shows pink trees that were cut down next to the interstate. The yellow trees are ash. Red trees have health issues. Pink represents newly planted trees. Moving forward with this data, there is a lot of potential. There is a website - [www.citycollaborative.org/loutreemap](http://www.citycollaborative.org/loutreemap). Patrick showed it to the LMTAC. Patrick said there questions that need answers such as who would have access to update the data. We need to explore these questions more.

Henry asked if the class could map trees south of Broadway. Patrick said it would take a long time to do this for every tree in Louisville.

Audience member asked if he could layer a LIDAR map with a “boots on the ground” map. Patrick said yes. Once he gets into LIDAR he'll know what's possible.

Patrick said the website lists the volunteers that helped to collect the data. The website shows the map and allows users to download the data. Patrick said it's a downtown Louisville Tree Survey. It's a snap shot for 2013 spring/summer. We've got to figure out how to keep it alive and going. Katy said it's a good idea to stay focused on downtown. Indy's project was \$450,000. This project was free. Patrick said aerial imagery isn't always effective because you can't see down through the tall buildings. We need good fine data for downtown to help mitigate the concrete downtown.

Henry asked how the LMTAC can work with Patrick to keep the data fresh. Patrick said they'd need to sit down and evaluate how to go about it. Henry said the data is extremely valuable when we go to businesses to ask for money.

Audience member said she participated in the initial data collection. There were a lot of pear trees. Henry asked if we should send a letter to the Provost to thank UofL for completing this work. Henry said if Patrick Piuma would draft the letter first, Henry will send it.

Katy said the canopy assessment the city is funding with MSD is an assessment and it's not an inventory. The canopy assessment is a major tool for the Urban Forester to drive tree planting. She asked Patrick how this data fits into the canopy assessment project. Patrick said it depends on how the tree estimates are derived. Mesude said they will be using LIDAR. Katy said the assessment data will go down to the census block level and provide what the current canopy is and what the potential is for more. Katy said honing in on the downtown is useful. Claude said another data piece to figure out is where a tree can go within the existing infrastructure.

Henry asked if this accounts for the quality of trees. Patrick said he's not a quality expert, he's a counting expert so he would need help with that. Mesude said we need to track the history of the trees. There is software available for this. Metro Parks is using this type of software. Maybe we should adopt this just for the downtown area. Patrick said they don't have the ability to give volunteers GPS equipment.

Commissioner Todd Eberle asked about the timeframe. Patrick said they did the majority of the work in a couple day period. Then students cleaned up the work and filled in the gaps through the summer. It was completely volunteer work and it was free.

Audience member asked if the presentation is available. Katy said the LMTAC has a lot of the data. Audience member asked if the PowerPoint is available to the public. Katy said she doesn't know. Patrick said you can email him at [info@citycollabortive.org](mailto:info@citycollabortive.org).

## **V. Committee Reports**

Katy said right now, we only have two committees. The Policy Committee is co-chaired by Todd and Betsy Bennett and Bonnie Loeb. It meets every two weeks. It would be hard for anyone who doesn't know about the code to understand what is happening at the meetings at this point. Katy said the Project committee is chaired by Erin Thompson, who is away this week, and Paul Cappiello who is also not here. Katy said that there will hopefully be a new committee to oversee the Tree Canopy Assessment contract. She also hopes to revive the community committee.

### **a. Policy Committee**

Todd gave the Policy Committee report. He said the Land Development Code (LDC) is going through the subcommittee review. Katy corrected him and said it was currently going through the Main

Committee review from the changes suggested by the subcommittee. March 11th is the next meeting. Katy said we need people to show up at that meeting because they will review the most controversial part. The meeting is from 3 – 5 at the Metro Development Center, 444 5th Street in the 1st Floor Conference Room.

Todd said the Policy Committee is also beginning to develop recommendations for a Tree Protection Ordinance. They are going to look at financial concerns and the community education commitment. Public tree requirements will be the heart of the regulations, specifically to what extent they involve the activities of private landowners. The ordinance will also address enforcement policies and how appeals are made. As some of these areas are finalized and developed, Todd said he will bring them to the LMTAC.

Audience member asked if the draft ordinance being developed will affect what's going on at Bowman Field or the utility companies. Todd said most ordinances defer to public utilities. Public utilities have the ability to trim trees.

Katy said the 1994 Taskforce Report was full of issues concerning LG&E's trimming of trees, but it was basically ignored. Todd said the FAA will probably control what's going on at Bowman Field

## **Projects Committee**

Mike Hayman gave the update on behalf of the co-chairs. He said there is a small project at Kosair Charities. The Sustainability Conference is willing to do that with Ecotech. Metro Parks will plant three trees in Cherokee Park. They are big trees that would otherwise be thrown away. Another planting session will take place at Ginny Reichard Park. It will include 10 trees in the park, and 14 or more around the area. That's in Butchertown – an area that really needs trees.

Audience member said the Story Ave Park will get some trees. The park has improved because they removed a decrepit building.

Mike Hayman said the priorities of the committee are downtown and lawns. Erin Thompson has 40 trees going in on South Broadway but he said he's not up-to-date on those plantings. The number of collaborators downtown is 19. That's not counting what Mesude is doing.

Henry asked who just planted Broadway. Mark White, Ex-Officio Commissioner (City Arborist) said it's the Downtown Management District.

Katy said the Project Committee is evolving into a mission to coordinate the investment of public funds – the \$250,000 in the mayor's budget. The tree canopy assessment will help to drive the planting of those trees to get the best results out of the investment.

Henry asked Mike to talk about Kingsley Market. Mike said they put in 20 medium or small sized trees. Mike got a message from Mary Ellen Spencer that a property owner cut down two huge healthy trees where a local business was planning to expand their parking lot without a permit. Sherie Long, Ex-officio Commissioner (Planning and Design Services), said until the development plan is submitted the property owner can do anything he/she wants to the trees.

## **VI. Community Projects Updates**

### **a. Louisville Nursery Association**

The President of the Louisville Nursery Association (LNA), Chris Summers, said it is one of the oldest horticultural associations in the country. He said it began in 1923 and is comprised of the

best horticulturalists in the city. LNA wants to be more visible and help the community. They are trying to increase gardening and horticulture in the city. They put up a website. They have wanted to do a high profile planting with new and exciting plants. An LNA member said they are not a big organization. Chris said they reached out to Mike and Mark. LNA used organization funds to purchase plants at a reduced rate from growers within the organization. There is a press conference planned for Saturday. LNA member said they used dues from the association. Members are individuals and larger organizations.

Henry asked when and where the press conference will take place. Chris said Saturday, March 8th at 9am. The Press Conference is at 10:30. It will be held around the City Hall parking lot. Henry asked to put LNA information in the minutes. [www.louisvillenurseryassociation.org](http://www.louisvillenurseryassociation.org).

Commissioner Amy Johnson asked about the purpose of the event and whether it was to put in native plants. An LNA member said all species are locally grown. Some are significant in size.

Audience member asked why they are not planting trees in the middle of the parking lot. LNA member said they don't have the volunteer time to coordinate such a big effort, which would include new pavement cuts. Instead, they are planting trees in spaces already available.

#### **b. Louisville Tree Fund – Katy Schneider and Allen Steinbock**

Allen invited attendees to take an envelope and contemplate contributing. The fund has around \$13,000 so far. Katy said she drafted a procedure for expenditures from the Louisville Tree Fund (see Attachment C). It lacks specificity as what we see as uses for the funds (e.g., donations to nonprofits or individuals or community organizations). She said we want to mirror the Brightside Foundation to make sure we uphold their nonprofit status.

Mike asked if we can plant on private property. Katy said the funds are only for private property. The Louisville Tree Fund was created to support the mission of the LMTAC and is housed within the Brightside Foundation. Katy said Allen serves as the LMTAC representative on the Brightside Foundation Board. Allen will take it to the Brightside Board for ratification.

Allen asked if we have plans to attend any fairs. Katy said not yet.

### **VII. Audience questions**

Audience member said he is a farmer from Tucker Station Road. He emailed Maria and Katy. He passed around copies of a news story. He said that the public normally only hears about downtown. He urged the Commission to not forget about the suburbs. He said the story shows how his family has implemented conservation practices for decades. Those conservation efforts will be destroyed as part of a new development. His family's development practices haven't changed. He said we're still paving over the landscape. He asked why developers can't build around forested acres. He said he is the president of the Tucker Neighborhood Association. He asks the Tree Commission to keep thinking big and remember the suburbs.

### **VIII. Adjourn**

Meeting adjourned by Henry at 6:30pm. The next meeting will be held Tuesday, March 25, 2014, at 5pm.